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ABSTRACT

This executive summary briefly outlines the methodology used and data collected in the National Survey of Head Start Supplementary Training/Child Development Associate (HSST/CDA) Competency Based Training Programs. (HSST/CDA training programs are intended to prepare Head Start classroom staff to meet the competency requirements of the CDA credential.) Three sets of survey questionnaires--one set each for project managers, field supervisors, and trainees--were distributed and self administered. Questionnaire findings are presented briefly in a question and answer format under the following general headings: characteristics of the program, characteristics of the trainees, assessment (the number of trainees receiving the credential), and opinions of program participants about the effects and strengths of the CDA Training Program. Conclusions derived from the findings are reported and policy requirement considerations for HSST/CDA contractors/grantees are briefly addressed. (Author/SE)

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AN ASSESSMENT OF HEAD START SUPPLEMENTARY TRAINING PROGRAMS IN PROVIDING CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE COMPETENCY BASED TRAINING

Prepared For

Administration for Children, Youth & Families
Department of Health, Education and Welfare

VOLUME 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - NATIONAL SURVEY
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This Final Report of the National Survey of HSST/CDA Competency Based Training Programs is presented in three volumes:

Volume I - Executive Summary of the Final Report
Volume II - Final Report
Volume III - Appendix to the Final Report

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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH EFFORT

THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE CREDENTIAL

The Child Development Associate (CDA) Concept, is a system for training, assessing and credentialing persons whose primary responsibility is to direct the daily activities of a group of preschool children. Candidates who can successfully demonstrate their competence are awarded a Child Development Associate Credential and become a CDA. Sole responsibility for the CDA Credential award system has been delegated to the Child Development Associate Consortium (CDAC), a national organization funded under a contract from the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF).

HSST/CDA PROGRAM

To develop appropriate training resources which could prepare Head Start classroom staff to meet the competency requirements of the CDA Credential, the Office of Child Development (OCD, now ACYF) began the gradual transformation of an existing training program, Head Start Supplementary Training, to achieve this end. The policy instruction mandating this change was Office of Child Development Instruction I-33-324-1, Head Start Supplementary Training Policy. This two track training program, HSST/CDA, began in 1973.

Head Start Supplementary Training (HSST), which began in 1968, was designed and funded by OCD to offer standard college-level training for Head Start staff. With the establishment of the HSST/CDA program, institutions operating HSST programs were to continue to provide standard college course training to non-classroom staff and certain classroom staff well advanced in degree-oriented programs. Concomitantly, they were to design and begin implementation of a CDA training program for Head Start classroom staff.

In providing CDA training, HSST/CDA contractors/grantees had to meet specific criteria. First, the training had to be competency-based; that is, it had to focus specifically on helping trainees acquire the CDA competencies. The training had to be fifty percent field-based and provisions had to be made

for integration of the academic and field work. The training was to be both individualized and flexibly scheduled. This would allow the more skilled trainees to complete the training in less time and was further intended to negate trainees having to repeat material previously learned. Finally, educational institutions offering CDA training also had to offer valid credit for the training.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH EFFORT

ACYF, having expanded the HSST program to include CDA competency-based training then wished to examine the effectiveness of the HSST/CDA program. A two phased research effort was designed to achieve this. Phase One was the conduct of a national survey of all HSST/CDA programs in an attempt to answer the following questions:

- Were HSST/CDA training institutions providing CDA training which met ACYF requirements?
- What were the different approaches being used by the various HSST/CDA training institutions?
- What were the characteristics of the HSST/CDA training institutions and their personnel?
- What was the effect of HSST/CDA training: On the persons and institutions responsible for the training; On the trainees; On the Head Start programs which employed the trainees?

Phase Two was the conduct of a national study of selected HSST/CDA trainees and institutions. The questions to be answered by this study were: What was the relationship between participation in an HSST/CDA training program and effective performance in the CDA Credential Award System? Were there differences between HSST/CDA training programs, and if so, was there a relationship between these differences and program effectiveness?

ACYF then contracted with Kirschner Associates, Inc. to conduct this research effort. This report is a summary of the findings and conclusions of the national survey phase of the research.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The respondent universe comprised all HSST/CDA funded training programs which were in operation in 1976, the time of the initial data collection effort,

and which continued to provide HSST/CDA training through the spring of 1978.

Data collection instruments were developed by project staff in concert with ACYF staff. Three separate instruments, one each for project managers, field supervisors and trainees, were developed specifically for this survey. The instruments were designed to obtain information on the characteristics of the HSST/CDA training institutions, their personnel, their training methods and their trainees. All survey instruments were self-administered.

The identification of program characteristics focused attention on various aspects of the Head Start programs and training institutions. Variables of interest were:characteristics of the HSST/CDA training institutions; cost of training; T/TA needs, characteristics of the HSST/CDA training program; CDA assessment; characteristics of HSST/CDA staff; characteristics of the HSST/CDA field supervisors; characteristics of HSST/CDA trainees; and characteristics of Head Start grantees.

The identification of training methods focused attention on various aspects of the CDA training programs. Variables of interest were:characteristics of HSST/CDA staff; field supervisors; the CDA assessment process; and methods utilized to implement the CDA program.

Data collection activities for the national survey took place during the middle of the 1977-78 program year. Following OMB approval, packets of questionnaires were sent to each HSST/CDA project manager who was in turn responsible for distributing questionnaires to all field supervisors/trainers and a sample of CDA trainees.

Survey data were analyzed through descriptive statistical techniques including one-way and two-way frequency distribution and contingency analyses. Tables 1,2 and 3 contain summaries of the distribution and return per federal region for each survey instrument.

TABLE 1

HSST/CDA PROJECT MANAGER QUESTIONNAIRE (FORM NPM)

DISTRIBUTION AND RETURN PER FEDERAL REGION

Federal Region	Number of HSST/CDA Project Manager Forms Returned	Total Number of HSST/CDA Project Manager Forms Distributed	Percent Responding Per Region
1	11	13	85
2	9	12	75
3	7	10	70
4	12	18	67
5	10	30	33
6	11	12	92
7	6	9	67
8	1	1	100
9	3	4	75
10	5	5	100
IMPD	5	19	26
TOTAL	80	133	60

TABLE 2

HSST/CDA FIELD SUPERVISOR/TRAINER QUESTIONNAIRE (FORM NFS)

DISTRIBUTION AND RETURN PER FEDERAL REGION

Federal Region	Number of HSST/CDA Field Supervisor/Trainer Forms Returned	Total Number of HSST/CDA Field Supervisor/Trainer Forms Distributed	Percent Responding Per Region
1	34	63	54
2	11	28	39
3	16	26	62
4	21	40	53
5	16	46	35
6	30	41	73
7	8	35	23
8	30	60	50
9	29	58	50
10	24	35	69
IMPD	6	26	23
TOTAL	225	458	49

TABLE 3

HSST/CDA TRAINEE QUESTIONNAIRE (FORM NTR)

DISTRIBUTION AND RETURN PER FEDERAL REGION

Federal Region	Number of HSST/CDA CDA Trainee Forms Returned	Total Number of HSST/CDA Trainee Forms Distributed*	Percent Responding Per Region
1	33	75	44
2	23	73	32
3	33	78	42
4	60	211	28
5	23	110	21
6	107	255	42
7	23	105	22
8	33	96	34
9	23	227	10
10	24	50	48
IMPD	10	44	23
TOTAL	392	1324	30

* CDA Trainee forms were distributed by HSST/CDA Project Managers to a sample of approximately one-third of their current CDA trainees.

FINDINGS

The findings presented here will be highlights of those contained in the main body of the report. For this summary findings have been grouped under the following headings:

- Characteristics of CDA Training Programs
- Characteristics of CDA Trainees
- CDA assessment
- Effects of the CDA Training Program
- Strengths of the CDA Training Program

Under these headings the findings are presented in a question and answer format. The questions used are those which this survey was designed to answer.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CDA TRAINING PROGRAM

The characteristics of CDA training programs include specifics on the sponsoring institutions, their personnel and their CDA training programs. Unless otherwise noted the findings in this section are based on the information obtained from the 80 project manager questionnaires. The remaining data were received from 225 field supervisors and 392 trainees.

The field supervisor is the person who at a minimum is responsible for supervising the field experiences of the HSST/CDA trainees.

WHAT TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS PROVIDE CDA TRAINING? HOW MANY YEARS HAVE THESE INSTITUTIONS BEEN PROVIDING HSST/CDA TRAINING?

HSST/CDA training is provided through a variety of institutions. Universities, colleges and Head Start grantees are funded to provide CDA training. Of the 80 HSST/CDA programs responding, 36 are Head Start grantees, 18 are universities, 15 are four-year colleges, 8 are two-year colleges, and 3 are private contractors. Seventeen of the 36 Head Start grantees responding share much of the responsibility for CDA training with a cooperating educational institution, whereas 19 conduct their own CDA training. It should be noted, however, that twelve of these 19 Head Start programs have some type of arrangement with educational institutions such as purchase of college courses for their trainees.

Twenty-five of the 80 HSST/CDA programs serve multi-county areas, 25 serve state-wide areas, 21 serve county-wide areas, 4 serve city-wide areas, one serves a multi-city area and three serve a multi-state area. Predominantly, the type of area served by HSST/CDA programs is both urban and rural. The 80 programs serve a total of 400 Head Start grantees.

HSST/CDA training institutions have been providing HSST/CDA training for an average of four years.

HOW IS THE CDA TRAINING PROGRAM FUNDED? ARE OTHER FUNDS USED?

Responsibility for funding HSST/CDA training programs rests with the 10 Regional Offices of ACYF and the Indian and Migrant Program Division. Programs receive funds by one of three methods; by contract, by a grant, or by a subcontract from a grantee. Thirty-two of the 80 programs receive grants, 26 receive contracts and 19 are subcontracted by grantees. Three Head Start grantees reported receiving no funds as yet.

The total amount of HSST/CDA grant/contract funds received this year by the 80 programs is $2,849,470. Of this amount, $2,001,033 is allocated to CDA training. Twenty-four programs, or 30%, supplement their CDA training monies with other funds. Seventeen of the 24 reported that the total sum of these supplemented funds is $287,249. Thus the total amount of funds allocated to CDA training as reported by 80 programs is $2,288,282. Programs reported the greatest percentage of their CDA training funds are allocated to field training.

In addition, fifty-one percent of CDA trainees reported spending some additional money for CDA training. The expenditures most commonly reported by trainees were for travel, babysitting, portfolio materials and books.

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE COST PER TRAINEE?

Seventy-one of the 80 programs reported a total number of 2319 CDA training slots. Nine programs reported that they do not allocate their funds according to training slots. The mean estimated annual cost per trainee as reported by the 71 programs is $891.

There are variations in the average cost per trainee by category of training programs. In ascending order these are: Other, (private contractors), $272; Head Start grantees, $695; two-year colleges, $1,230; universities, $1,295; and four-year colleges, $1,516.

WHAT KIND OF BACKGROUND AND TRAINING DO FIELD SUPERVISORS HAVE? HAVE THEY HAD PRIOR EXPERIENCE IN THE CDA ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

Two hundred-twenty-five field supervisors (49%) returned their questionnaires. Demographic data pertaining to field supervisors indicate that 86 are between 31 and 40 years of age and that 75 are between 21 and 30 years of age. The overwhelming majority are female. Over 92% have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

As a group, field supervisors reported experience both as teachers of young children and as trainers of teachers of young children. In responding to questions related to their experience working with groups of three to five-year-old children, field supervisors reported an average of 8 years, 9 months total experience, nearly 3 years of which was in Head Start. Field supervisors also reported having experience training staff to work with young children. Eighty-four percent of field supervisors report that they had provided inservice or preservice training to Head Start staff.

Field supervisors reported being employed an average of 19 months by the present HSST/CDA training program. Twelve percent reported previous experience as a field supervisor at another institution. In addition, 9% of the field supervisors have earned a CDA Credential; over half (56%) have served as a member of a Local Assessment Team.

In relation to employment, 22% of the field supervisors are employed full-time; 71% are employed part-time; and 5% volunteer their services. As a group, they devote an average of 17 hours per week to the CDA program.

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE TRAINER-TO-TRAINEE RATIO?

HSST/CDA project managers reported that on the average a field supervisor is responsible for supervising 12 CDA trainees, a ratio of 1 to 12. The trainer to trainee ratios ranged from 1 field supervisor to 1 trainee up to 1 to 37. Field supervisors reported that the mean number of

of CDA trainees supervised is 11. All programs reported employing at least one field supervisor although some supervised zero trainees and some as many as 77.

WHERE IS CDA TRAINING CONDUCTED?

Field supervisors report that they make field visits to trainees' Head Start centers an average of 3 times per month. CDA trainees reported that their field supervisor visits them once every 19 days, less than twice a month. Both field supervisors and CDA trainees report that the field supervisor spends an average of 3 hours with the trainee during every visit.

One hundred fifty-seven field supervisors (70%) reported meeting trainees at places other than their Head Start centers an average of 2 times per month. These meeting places included a college or university office, the trainee's home, the field supervisor's home, and other offices or places.

DO TRAINEES RECEIVE AN INITIAL APPRAISAL?

A large number (179 or 80%) of field supervisors reported that trainees undergo an initial appraisal, or preassessment, upon entering CDA training. The most frequently mentioned tools or procedures used in an initial appraisal were classroom observation, trainee self-assessment, and the trainee's application form. Sixty-nine percent (272) of the CDA trainees also reported having an initial appraisal.

HOW IS CDA TRAINING INDIVIDUALIZED?

Some evidence of the individualization of CDA training was noted. Namely, that many field supervisors report trainees undergoing an initial appraisal. Review of the trainee's progress and periodic appraisals during training also support this claim. Most of the field supervisors (204, 91%) review each trainee's progress with the trainee at specified time intervals, on the

average, every 23 days. Most field supervisors (95% or 214) also report that trainees' experience and competence are periodically appraised during the training period. The tools or procedures most frequently utilized for this appraisal are classroom observation of the trainee, feedback conferences with the trainee, and trainee self-assessment.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE TRAINING IS SPENT IN SUPERVISED FIELD WORK?

CDA trainees report they spend an average of 22 hours per month in CDA training. Furthermore, trainees report they devote the majority of their time (60%) either preparing for or participating in supervised field experience.

WHAT TYPES OF FIELD EXPERIENCES ARE CONSIDERED MOST HELPFUL?

Supervised field experiences are crucial for helping trainees acquire the CDA competencies. Trainees were requested to select the three training methods they felt most useful. Of the 392 CDA trainees surveyed, 120 (31%) felt that having on-the-job discussions with the field supervisor or other staff was one of the most useful field training experiences; 90 trainees (23%) identified individual conferences with the field supervisor, followed by feedback and goal-setting related to the CDA competencies; 91 trainees (23%) selected demonstrations by the CDA staff, followed by group discussions as one of the most useful; whereas 77 (20%) felt that child study, that is, observing specific behaviors or doing case studies, was. Finally, 51 (13%) reported that discussion groups or seminars relating to classroom experiences were most useful.

HOW MANY PROGRAMS USE LEARNING MODULES? HOW MANY PROGRAMS HAVE DEVELOPED THEIR OWN MODULES?

Learning modules are used in many training programs so individual

students can progress at their own pace and in their own learning style toward identified objectives. A learning module is defined as a structure for experiences and activities designed to help a learner acquire and demonstrate a specific competency or group of competencies in an effective and efficient manner. Project managers report that 63 of the 80 programs, or 79%, use modules as part of their training program. Of the 63 programs using CDA learning modules, 43 developed their own learning modules or extensively modified existing modules for their program's use.

WHAT TYPES OF ACADEMIC TRAINING ARE CONSIDERED MOST HELPFUL?

Academic experiences are not seen as separate areas of knowledge to be acquired and mastered but as essential theoretical underpinnings for helping trainees understand and internalize the CDA competencies. Trainees selected the academic experiences that they deemed most useful. Of the 392 trainees surveyed, 159 (41%) reported that workshops, seminars and small group discussions were the most useful; 115 felt that existing college courses were most useful; 81 felt that courses or lectures arranged on the basis of student interest or demand were; and, 77 felt that independent study or reading arranged with faculty members was most useful. Sixty-nine identified programmed instruction, prepared modules, or learning activity packages as being most useful, whereas, 61 felt supplementary study assignments followed by discussion were.

IS COLLEGE CREDIT AWARDED FOR CDA TRAINING? IS THE CREDIT TRANSFERABLE? CAN THE CREDIT BE USED TO FULFILL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS?

The awarding of college credit for CDA credit is offered by many CDA training programs. As indicated by project managers, 66 of the 80 HSST/CDA programs (83%) offer credit for training. All 41 of the educational institution contractors offer credit for training as do the three private contractors.

Of the 29 Head Start grantees which have either delegated responsibility for CDA training to an educational institution or have a supplemental training arrangement with an educational institution, 22 offer credit.

The number of credits offered for CDA training ranges from three credit hours to seventy-two credit hours, with three programs reporting that an unspecified number of credits are offered for CDA training.

Frequently, the credit offered for CDA training meets course requirements for a degree program. Thirty-seven of the programs report that the credit offered will meet elective course requirements for an Associate of Arts degree program; 41 report that it will meet these requirements for Bachelor's degree programs. Thirty-two programs report that this credit will meet non-elective course requirements for an Associate of Arts degree program; 25 report that it will meet non-elective requirements for a BA/BS program. Fifty-six programs of the 66 offering credit state that the credit offered for CDA training is usually transferable to another educational institution; the remaining 10 did not know.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO COMPLETE CDA TRAINING?

The amount of training and the type of training is tailored to an individual trainee's needs. Therefore, the time needed by a trainee to complete his/her CDA training varies. HSST/CDA project managers report that the average planned length of their CDA training program is 1 year, 11 months. Similarly, the average length of time trainees need to complete CDA training is 1 year, 11 months. Field supervisors report that the length of time trainees need to complete training is 1 year, 9 months.

The CDA trainees reporting indicate they have been in CDA training for an average of 16 months, and plan to spend an additional 7 months in training, for a total of 1 year, 11 months in training. The largest percentage (65%), of trainees report that they are in the process of continuing CDA training. Many of those continuing (67%) have been in training for 12 months or less, whereas only 13% report having been in training for over two years.

Some CDA trainees reported that various conditions interrupted their CDA training. Among the reasons mentioned were, in order of decreasing frequency, a personal illness, time of training, a family illness, lack of support from a family member, pregnancy, and a lack of transportation. Additionally, the trainees whose training had been interrupted reported, on the average, having been in training 6 months longer.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HSST/CDA TRAINEES

Information on HSST/CDA trainees was obtained from questionnaires returned by the 80 project managers and the 392 trainees.

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE IN CDA TRAINING?

As reported by 78 project managers, there are 3,072 CDA trainees in 78 CDA training programs. Of these 1,473 are classroom teachers. and 1,434 are classroom aides. Only 165 non-classroom staff were reported to be in CDA training.

WHO ARE HSST/CDA TRAINEES?

As reported by 57 project managers the largest percentage of HSST/CDA trainees are in the 21-30 year age group (40%). The next largest percentage (37%) are in the 31-40 year age group. Less than 4% are male. All but 7% have completed high school and 64% have completed some college. Seven percent of this latter group have received their BA degree.

WHAT CRITERIA ARE USED TO SELECT CDA TRAINEES?

The most frequently utilized selection criterion is trainee's interest in early childhood education. Also frequently mentioned are trainee interest in building on previous Head Start or other training, Head Start career development plan, trainee preference, need to upgrade trainee's classroom to meet performance standards, and good job performance. Criteria used least frequently are age limitation for trainee, having a Bachelor or Associate Arts degree, and ineligibility for HSST training.

WHAT KINDS OF EXPERIENCE HAVE CDA TRAINEES HAD WORKING WITH CHILDREN? HOW MUCH OF THIS EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN IN HEAD START?

As reported by the trainees, CDA trainees have an average of 7 years, one month total experience working with three to five -year old children.

By far the largest amount of this experience, an average of 6 years and 4 months, has been in Head Start programs.

The 5 CDA trainees holding the positions of Head Start Director or Educational Coordinator have the most experience in the Head Start program. This group reported an average of 8 years, 8 months experience. Head Start teachers in CDA training (138) report an average of 7 years, one month of experience in the Head Start program. In contrast, classroom aides in CDA training (174) report an average of 4 years, one month of experience in Head Start.

Fifty-six project managers reported on the number of CDA trainees who were formerly or are presently a Head Start parent. Fifty of these 56 noted that 374 or 33% of the 1126 CDA trainees in those programs have children previously or currently enrolled in Head Start.

HAVE CDA TRAINEES ADVANCED IN THE HEAD START PROGRAM?

One hundred ninety-seven CDA trainees, over 50%, reported having held positions in the Head Start programs other than the one they presently hold. Specifically, of 138 teachers in CDA training, 67 had been teacher aides at one time; 18 had been on the social service, health service or parent involvement staff; 6 were cooks at one time; 3 had been cook aides; and 12 had held other positions such as bus driver or had been a parent volunteer.

Teacher aides in CDA training gave evidence of career advancement in the Head Start program. Of 177 teacher aides, 19 had previously been on the social service, health service or parent involvement staff; 12 had been cooks; 3 had been cook aides; and 16 had held other positions.

Center Directors in CDA training provide the most dramatic evidence of career advancement. Of the 35 Center Directors reporting, 23 had been Head Start teachers. Thus, these findings demonstrate that career advancement opportunities are available in the Head Start program. Additionally, based on these data reported by CDA trainees, it is quite prevalent.

WHY DO CDA TRAINEES DROP OUT OF TRAINING?

Seventy-five of the 80 project managers reported that a total of 363 trainees dropped out of CDA training this program year. The most frequently cited reasons for trainees dropping out were they left Head Start employment, family demands increased, and the CDA program was too time consuming.

WHAT ARE THE CAREER PLANS OF CDA TRAINEES?

Upon completing CDA training, most CDA trainees (82.4%) plan to continue their education. Almost half of these trainees plan to work towards a Bachelor's degree. Eleven trainees indicated that they already have a degree. Over three-fourths of Head Start teachers and teacher aides in CDA training plan to continue their education. It appears that participation in the CDA training program, while not necessarily being the instigating factor, tends to foster trainees' plans to continue seeking educational opportunities. Or, conversely, it may be the career opportunities which attract many trainees to the CDA training program.

Nearly 85% of the responding CDA trainees (333) do not plan to leave Head Start employment upon completing CDA training. However, 83 of the 333 plan to apply for a higher position. Specifically, some teacher aides appear to perceive the completion of CDA training and the achievement of the credential as an opportunity for career advancement within the Head Start program. Fifty of the 83 trainees planning to apply for higher positions presently hold the position of teacher aides, in contrast to only 15 who are Head Start teachers.

CDA ASSESSMENT

HSST/CDA training programs are designed to give trainees the necessary training and support to enable them to apply for and acquire a CDA Credential. In this section data are presented on the number of trainees who have received the credential.

HOW MANY HSST/CDA TRAINEES HAVE BEEN ASSESSED?
HOW MANY HSST/CDA TRAINEES HAVE RECEIVED THEIR CDA CREDENTIAL?

A total of 1147 persons from 78 reporting institutions have been assessed by the CDA Consortium. Of these 664 were assessed by the CDA Consortium last program year; 359 persons have been assessed so far in this program year. Seventy-seven CDA training institutions report that 1089 out of 1141 persons who were assessed have received the CDA credential. Thus 52 persons from these programs were not successful in receiving the CDA credential. Based on this survey, the success rate of CDA trainees who apply for CDA assessment is 95.4%.

DO ALL TRAINEES COMPLETING CDA TRAINING APPLY TO THE CDA CONSORTIUM FOR FORMAL ASSESSMENT?

Seventy-five of the 80 project managers report that 1149 current CDA trainees have applied to the CDA Consortium for assessment. Three-hundred fifty-nine CDA trainees have been assessed in the current program year (reported by 77 project managers). Three hundred and twelve CDA trainees have currently completed CDA training but have not yet applied to the CDA Consortium for assessment (reported by 73 project managers). When these figures are compared to the number of Head Start staff currently in CDA training, 3072 (reported by 78 project managers), it becomes apparent that over one-third (1149/3072) of current trainees have applied for assessment by the CDA Consortium, whereas approximately 10% (312/3072) of those trainees who have completed

their training have not as yet applied. This finding, that 10% of the current CDA trainees have completed the training program but have not yet applied for assessment, may be attributed to any number of reasons. One possible interpretation is that this finding may be a reflection on the complexity of the CDA application and assessment process as perceived by trainees. Another may be that Head Start staff, while valuing CDA training, do not value obtaining a CDA credential. Or it may be that at the time some of the project manager survey questionnaires were returned, late in the program year, these trainees had not yet applied for assessment.

EFFECTS OF CDA TRAINING PROGRAM

Throughout sections of each questionnaire form, respondents were requested to offer their opinions concerning various aspects of the training program. In this section on the national survey of CDA training programs, we will report the opinions offered by HSST/CDA project managers, field supervisors and CDA trainees. We feel that these opinions are equally as important as other data presented in the report, and thus merit attention.

HAVE CHANGES OCCURRED IN HEAD START PROGRAMS AS A RESULT OF THE CDA TRAINING PROGRAM?

Eighty project managers and 225 field supervisors reported the changes that they believed to have taken place in Head Start programs as a consequence of CDA training. Over 82% of both groups of respondents reported there had been improvement in the way teachers worked with children, their parents and with other staff. And related to this, 86% of project managers and 92% of field supervisors felt that the CDA trainees were both more aware of their actions as teachers in relation to childrens' behavior and more inclined to see children as individuals.

HAVE CHANGES OCCURRED AT THE TRAINING INSTITUTIONS AS A RESULT OF CDA TRAINING?

Of the 80 project managers who gave changes which have occurred over time in their own institutions as a result of the CDA training program, 60% reported that the training provided by their institution was now more closely related to the CDA competencies. Over 46% reported that trainees could now take early childhood education courses before taking other college courses and 36% reported that their teacher practicum experience had been revised as a consequence of the CDA program. Thirty-six percent felt that their staff were better trained.

DO TRAINEES FEEL THEY HAVE BENEFITED FROM CDA TRAINING?

All CDA trainees felt they benefited from their participation in CDA training. Of these, 93% reported that the training had improved their skills in working with children. Over 87% felt the training that they were receiving would assist them in receiving a CDA Credential. About 74% reported receiving credit for their training as a benefit, and 67% felt the training would prepare them for a better job. The opportunity to integrate academic and on-the-job training experiences was seen as a benefit. Thus, trainees as a whole perceived both immediate and long term benefits from their CDA training.

STRENGTHS OF THE HSST/CDA PROGRAM

Both project managers and field supervisors were requested to report what they felt was the greatest strength of the CDA training program. Trainees as well as project managers and field supervisors were asked to identify those areas which were most in need of improvement.

WHAT IS THE GREATEST STRENGTH OF THE CDA TRAINING PROGRAM?

Nearly 81% of the field supervisors reported that the supervised field training increased trainee competence and over 76% of the project managers felt that the CDA training was more relevant to the trainees' jobs than college course work alone. Clearly, both groups feel that the greatest strength of the CDA program lies in the field training component. That is, job-related training, as opposed to academic work alone, seems to account for the great improvement seen in trainees' performance. About 67% of the field supervisors reported one strength of the CDA training program as being the observable progress and increased competence of the trainees, and 62% felt the opportunity for the trainer to know trainees as individuals was a strength of the program.

WHAT ARE THE AREAS NEEDING THE MOST IMPROVEMENT IN THE CDA TRAINING PROGRAM?

All respondents were requested to indicate what they felt were the two areas needing the most improvement in the CDA training program. Because their level of participation and involvement differs, each group of project managers, field supervisors and CDA trainees was presented with different alternatives from which to choose.

The area that most project managers (64%) felt warranted improvement was the need for increased funding. In contrast, the next most frequently identified area, the need for more readily available training materials, was reported by only 25% of the project managers.

The area which field supervisors most frequently identified as needing improvement (63.6%) was the amount of time available to work with trainees. The need for greater correlation between classroom and field instruction and the need for improved systems for scheduling field visits were both reported by 25% of the field supervisors as areas which could be improved.

Field supervisors were also asked to respond to areas of cooperation which could be improved between Head Start grantees/delegate agencies and the HSST/CDA training program. The two areas most frequently identified were improved coordination of CDA training with other training received (51%) and more release time for the CDA trainees (50%).

Of the 392 CDA trainees reporting, 29% wanted assurance that credit received for CDA training would meet degree requirements and be transferable to other colleges. Interestingly, the item next most frequently reported was that the program was "O.K. as is" (27%). Finally, nearly 25% wanted to be able to spend more time with their field supervisor.

CONCLUSIONS

In summarizing the findings of the national survey of HSST/CDA training programs, it is important to view the findings in light of the respondent rate. The data are based on reports from approximately 46% of all groups surveyed. One can speculate that those who were most responsive may be persons most dedicated to or having the strongest feelings about the CDA program. This hypothesis is made more credible when one looks at the CDA field supervisor data. The reporting field supervisors indicate that they have trained a large number of persons subsequently receiving a CDA Credential. Clearly, these field supervisors have made a strong commitment to the program.

A second aspect which should be kept in mind is that the questionnaires from the three different respondent groups (HSST/CDA project managers, field supervisors and CDA trainees) were not necessarily received from the same programs, and thus, may not reflect the true proportions of each category of respondent. For example, 41 out of the 80 project manager questionnaires were returned by educational institution contractors, whereas 36 came from Head Start grantees and three from private contracting firms. Any comparisons made between different respondent groups and between the respondents and the population should be noted in light of the fact that project managers from 85% of the 48 educational institutions responded as opposed to only 44% of those from the 81 Head Start grantees. There are nevertheless some interesting relationships which can be perceived.

Conclusions derived from the findings of this study are presented under two main headings. One includes general conclusions related to the characteristics of the HSST/CDA contractors/grantees, the field supervisors and the CDA trainees. The second includes conclusions related to the requirements for HSST/CDA contractors/grantees in the Office of Child Development (now ACYF) Instruction I-33-324-1-40 on *Head Start Supplementary Training Policy*, dated February 23, 1973.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HSST/CDA CONTRACTORS/GRANTEES, FIELD SUPERVISORS AND TRAINEES

HSST/CDA Contractors/Grantees

Educational institutions are the main providers of CDA training. Of the 80 HSST/CDA programs responding to this survey 41, slightly over half, were educational institutions. In addition, 19 of the 36 Head Start grantees responding reported having subcontracts with educational institutions.

While 30% of the HSST/CDA contractors/grantees supplement their CDA training funds, the vast majority of the training monies continue to be those specifically allocated for that purpose.

Only two (6%) of the Head Start grantees reported adding additional staff to provide CDA training whereas slightly more than 40% of the educational institutions reported adding new staff. One reason for this may be that many Head Start programs reported having cooperating arrangements with educational institutions for the provision of training.

Field Supervisors

Data received from field supervisors indicate that field supervisors as a group have had extensive experience both working with three to five-year-old children in various settings and as trainers or instructors in early childhood education. The assumption can safely be made that field supervisors tend to be selected from among those persons who are experienced both as teachers of young children and as teachers of teachers of young children. In addition, there are indications of in-depth involvement of field supervisors in the CDA system as evidenced by those who have worked at other institutions as field supervisors, have earned a CDA Credential themselves, or have served on an LAT. This data may also be viewed as an indication that the CDA Credential is becoming increasingly integrated into the child care profession.

Trainees

CDA trainees are predominatly female and between the ages of 21 and 40. Nearly all have completed high school and close to two-thirds have completed some college.

CDA trainees have had an average of seven years total experience working with three to five-year-old children. On the average six of these seven years have been spent working with Head Start children. This would indicate that those classroom staff in CDA training are part of a stable group of Head Start personnel. Training these persons to become CDAs should result in the desired improvement in the quality of child care provided in Head Start programs.

HEAD START SUPPLEMENTARY TRAINING POLICY REQUIREMENTS

This section is divided into subsections which address the six criteria for HSST/CDA training programs and general provisions for institutions which are specified in OCD instruction I-33-324-1-40 on *Head Start Supplementary Training Policy*. These are

- CDA Competencies/Assessment
- Credit
- Supervised Field Work
- Integration of Academic and Field Experiences
- Individualized Training
- Flexible Scheduling
- Institutional Changes
- Career Development
- Classroom Staff
- Child Development Skills

CDA Competencies/Assessment

HSST/CDA training was to be designed so that each component related to specific CDA competencies with completion of the entire training program resulting in attainment of all the CDA competencies.

Sixty percent of the project managers reported that the CDA training was now more closely related to the CDA competencies. In support of this, over 95% of the HSST/CDA trainees who have been assessed (1089/1141) from the reporting institutions received their CDA Credential. In light of this finding, it must be noted that approximately 10% of CDA trainees have completed training but have not yet applied for assessment by the CDA Consortium. This may be attributed to any number of reasons. One possible interpretation is that this finding may be a reflection on the complexity of the CDA application and assessment process as perceived by trainees. Another may be that Head Start staff, while valuing CDA training, do not value obtaining a CDA Credential. Or it may be that at the time some of the project manager survey questionnaries were returned, late in the program year, these trainees had not yet applied for assessment.

Credit

HSST grantees, if they are colleges or universities, must offer valid credit for CDA training. Grantees that are not colleges or universities should work with nearby colleges and universities to obtain credit for trainees.

All 41 of the educational institutions responding to this survey offer credit for CDA training. The three private contractors and over half of the Head Start grantees (those with cooperating agreements with educational institutions) also offer credit. The amount of credit offered and the methods for awarding it vary, however. A few institutions give a certain number of credits to all trainees who receive a CDA Credential; others give credit only for courses taken. This latter policy may encourage trainees to continue in training, rather than being assessed, in order to obtain the maximum number of credits available.

Trainees, when asked which areas of the program needed improvement, wanted assurance that credits received for CDA training be both applicable

toward degree requirements and transferable to other colleges. Similarly, 74% of the trainees considered receiving credits for their training as one of its main benefits.

Supervised Field Work

Approximately 50 percent or more of the trainees' total training time must be spent in supervised field work.

The allocation of training monies by HSST/CDA contractors/grantees indicates that educational institutions have progressed from providing the primarily academic training of HSST to providing the more field based training of CDA. All of the educational institutions reported spending more money for field training than for academic training. The percentage of money spent by institutions for field training varies, from 62.5% for private contractors to 32.8% for four-year colleges. Of the educational institutions, two-year colleges allocate the largest percentage of their money to field training.

Further evidence of implementation of the field based part of the training is that all programs reported employing at least one field supervisor with an average ratio of one field supervisor to 12 trainees. These field supervisors visit each trainee in the field between two and three times a month. These visits last an average of three hours each. Thus, trainees receive on the average between 6 and 9 hours of supervised field experience per month.

However, both field supervisors and trainees expressed a need to be able to spend more time in this activity. Possibly related to this, project managers reported a need for increased training funds.

Integration Of Academic And Field Experiences

HSST/CDA training must be organized so that academic and field experiences are integrated.

It is difficult to determine from the survey the extent to which the academic and field experiences are integrated. However, nearly three-fourths of the trainees perceived the opportunity to integrate on-the-job experiences with academic training as a benefit of the HSST/CDA training program. The academic experiences trainees felt were most helpful (40%) were those in workshops, seminars and small group discussions, while only 29% felt that traditional academic courses were most helpful. Of the field experiences which were most helpful, 31% identified on-the-job discussions with the field supervisor and 23% identified individual conferences with the field supervisor.

Individualized Training

HSST/CDA training must be individualized.

There are several indices from this survey that training is individualized. Eighty percent of the field supervisors report that trainees undergo an initial assessment upon entering CDA training. And 95% of the field supervisors report that the trainees' experience and competence are periodically appraised during the training period.

Flexible Scheduling

Training must be flexibly scheduled so that the length of training time can vary and so that exit from the training program depends on each trainee's acquisition of the CDA competencies.

The findings of this survey do not offer strong evidence of the flexibility of the length of CDA training. Project managers report that the average planned length of CDA training is 1 year 11 months. Similarly the average length of time trainees need to complete CDA training is 1 year 11 months. In corroboration of this, of the trainees planning to continue in training 67% have been in training less than a year as opposed to 13% who have been in training more than two years. Whether many trainees finish in less than the average time is open to conjecture.

Institutional Changes

HSST/CDA training was to be designed so that it met trainee needs rather than institutional requirements.

In reporting on the changes that had occured in their insitutions as a result of the HSST/CDA training program, 60% of the project managers reported that the training provided by their institutions was now more closely related to the CDA competencies; 46% reported the availability of an inverted curriculum (that is trainees could take child development courses before taking courses in other areas); and 36% reported that the teacher practicum experiences had been revised at their institutions as a result of CDA training.

Twenty-three, or 29%, of the HSST/CDA contractors/grantees reported that they provide CDA training for non-Head Start staff. This would seem to indicate not only a healthy integration of CDA training into educational institutions but a demand for CDA training from child care givers who are not Head Start staff, and is one more indication that the CDA Credential is becoming accepted as an integral part of the child care profession.

Career Development

The HSST/CDA program was intended to provide appropriate training and career development to facilitate upward mobility for Head Start staff.

There are several findings of this survey which make it possible to conclude that this objective is being met. First, over 50% of the CDA trainees in the survey report having held positions in Head Start programs other than the one they presently hold. For example, 66% of the center directors had previously been Head Start teachers and 49% of the teachers had been classroom aides. Related to this is the finding that 33% of the CDA trainees in 56 of the reporting programs had been Head Start parents. Similarly, 67% of the trainees feel that their CDA training is preparing them for better jobs. Also upon completing training most CDA trainees plan to continue their education.

Classroom Staff

The HSST/CDA program was intended to provide training for classroom staff.

The findings of this survey indicate that the HSST/CDA training program is indeed training classroom staff rather than non-classroom staff. Of 3072 trainees in the 80 HSST/CDA programs reporting, 2907 are classroom staff. Further it can be assumed that many of the remaining 165 are educational supervisors of classroom staff.

Child Development Skills

The HSST/CDA program was intended to improve the skills of Head Start staff in delivering services to Head Start children.

Sixty-seven percent of the field supervisors reported one strength of the CDA training program as being the observable progress and increased competence of CDA trainees. And 93% of the CDA trainees reported that their training had improved their skills in working with children.

Finally, over 80% of both project managers and field supervisors report seeing improvement in the way Head Start classroom staff who are CDA trainees perform. And, approximately 86% of the project managers and 92% of the field supervisors feel that trainees are both more aware of their actions as teacher in relation to children's behavior and are more likely to see children as individuals. Apparently those persons with ongoing opportunity to observe CDA trainees fulfilling their teaching responsibilitites can see marked improvement in their teaching behaviors. If this is consistently the case then the CDA training program may indeed be achieving its primary goal of improving the quality of child care in Head Start programs.